

Fashioning Our Identity – Hazelwood Historic Home Museum Internship

by Rachel Scray



Full (engorged) skirt, 1860s



Lavish Hats, 1900s



Women's Tailored Suits, 1930s

My name is Rachel Scray and I am a History, Humanities, and Arts Management student studying at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay. This spring semester, I have had the wonderful opportunity of interning at the Hazelwood Historic House Museum in Green Bay. The Hazelwood Historic House has been working on an exhibit, “Fashioning our Identity,” that celebrates 200 years of Brown County through fashion. Throughout the semester, I have been researching the history of Brown County and the history of fashion trends that evolved throughout our history with the aim of providing historical context and visuals to help bring this museum exhibit to life.

Exploring the fashion trends of past decades can help us visualize our county’s life and better understand the historical events that shaped our identity in a multitude of different ways. From the colors we pick, the stores we frequent, and the social and political environment in which we live. Who we are is ingrained in our sense of style, which has obviously changed over time. The University Archives in Cofrin Library on the UWGB campus has been an excellent resource for finding amazing photos that encapsulate who we are as individuals and as a county. The Brown County Library has also been a great resource of historical information and background for each town that makes up our county.

When the exhibit is complete, each room at Hazelwood Historic House will profile a specific era in Brown County’s history that we will explore through fashion. The exhibit will start in a room dedicated to the time period 1818-1848, at the beginning of the Wisconsin Territory and Brown County. The next couple of rooms will depict 1860-1870, explore immigration, the Civil War, and the early development of Brown County and the period before the turn of the last century, 1880-1890. From there, the rooms shift to the 20th century, where the focus will turn to industrial (1900-1930s), business (1940-

1950s), and cultural (1960-1970) community development and end with 1980-2000 and what our County currently looks like now.

This internship has been an amazing experience researching, collecting images, and clothing that have influenced our identity. I am so excited to continue my internship with the Hazelwood Historic House throughout the summer and see my research displayed at this small gem of a museum right here in Green Bay. The Hazelwood Historic House exhibit will be open from July 12th through August 31st. So, come join us in walking through our history and the fashion trends that encapsulate who we were and now are!